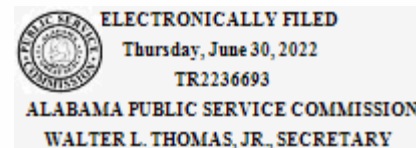




June 9, 2022



VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Walter L. Thomas, Jr., Secretary
Alabama Public Service Commission
RSA Union Building
100 North Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

RE: Pine Belt Telephone Company, Inc.'s Certification of Eligibility to Receive High Cost Support for 2023 Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 254; 47 C.F.R. § 54.314; APSC Docket 25980; FCC WC Docket No. 14-58

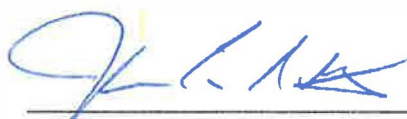
Dear Mr. Thomas:

In conjunction with the Alabama Public Service Commission's (the "Commission") annual certification requirements, please find attached for electronic filing Pine Belt Telephone Company Inc.'s ("Pine Belt") certification that it is eligible to continue to receive federal high-cost universal service support for the year 2023, in accordance with the requirements of Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, 47 C.F.R. § 54.314, APSC Docket No. 25980 and FCC WC Docket No. 14-58. The original and one copy will be delivered to the Commission.

Please be further advised that Pine Belt is in compliance with all applicable requirements for filing the FCC Form 481 for the program year 2023, as set forth in *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, Report and Order, 32 FCC Red 5944 (2017) ("*ETC Reporting Streamlining Order*") and *In the Matter of Connect America Fund*, Order, WC Docket 10-90 (DA 18-585) (June 6, 2018), and with this Commission's Orders in Docket No. 25980.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, or if any additional information is required, please contact me at (334) 385-2106.

Very truly yours,



John C. Nettles
President

Enclosure



WIRELESS | TELEPHONE
INTERNET | CABLE

CERTIFICATION

In its September 27, 2016 Order in APSC Docket 25980, this Commission undertook substantial revisions to its previous order of December 20, 2001, in this same docket, which required the "rural LEC Cost Companies" to file with the Commission a copy of their supporting annual interstate cost separation study, annual USF-HCLS filing and estimated USF-LSS filing for review, and the "rural LEC Average Schedule Companies" to file a copy of the Universal Service Administrative Company's ("USAC") and the National Exchange Carriers Association's ("NECA") proposed annual USF-HCLS and USF-LSS amounts for review.

In particular, this Commission found that the provisions of the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC") Connect America Fund Order (*Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing an Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90,07-135,05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208; and FCC 11-161, rel. Nov. 18, 2011) supersede and replace the requirements applicable to previous high-cost funding mechanisms. Eligible telecommunications carriers ("ETCs") now receive high-cost support that includes local switching support, and the FCC has implemented extensive reporting requirements for recipients of these funds. Because of these changes, the Commission found that it can adequately assess the Rural LECs' compliance with these federal reporting requirements based on a review of the annual FCC Form 481's submitted by the Rural LECs.

Accordingly, Pine Belt Telephone Company, Inc. ("Pine Belt") certifies its compliance in filing its FCC Form 481 for the program year 2023 as required. Pine Belt further certifies that all federal high-cost support provided to Pine Belt was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance and upgrading of facilities and services for which such support is intended, consistent with Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Pine Belt respectfully requests that the Commission notify the FCC prior to October 1 of this year that Pine Belt is eligible to receive federal high-cost support in 2023. Any questions regarding this submission or the underlying documentation submitted to the Commission should be directed to the undersigned at (334) 385-2106.

Respectfully Submitted,

PINE BELT TELEPHONE COMPANY, INC.

By:


John C. Nettles

As Its: President

Date:

6-9-2022